THE DELUGE

By DAVID GRAHAM PHILLIPS, Author of "THE CAST," etc

CHAPTER XII—Continued.

Ellersly sat opposite me, and I was irritated, and thrown into confusion, too, every time I lifted my eyes, by the crushed, criminal expression of his face. He ate and drank hugely—and extremely bad manners it would have been regarded in me had I made as much noise as he, or lifted such quantities at a time into my mouth. But through this noisy gluttony he managed somehow to maintain that hangdog air—like a thief who has gone through the house and, on his way out, has paused at the pantry, with the sack of plunder beside him, to gorge himself.

I looked at Anita several times, each time with a carefully-framed remark ready, each time I found her gaze on me—and I could say nothing, could only look away in a sort of panic. Her eyes were strangely variable. I have seen them of a gray, so pale that it was almost silver—like the steely light of the snow-line at the edge of the horizon; again, and they were so that evening, they shone with the deepest, softest blue, and made one think, as one looked at her, of a fresh violet frozen in a block of clear ice.

I sat behind her in the box at the theater. During the first and second intermissions several men dropped in to speak to her mother and her—fellows who didn't ever come down town, but I could tell they knew who I was by the way they ignored me. It exasperated me to a pitch of fury, that coldly insolent air of theirs—a jerky nod at me without so much as a glance, and no notice of me when they were leaving my box beyond a faint, supercilious smile as they passed with eyes straight ahead. I knew what it meant, what they were thinking—that the "Bucket-shop King," as the newspapers had dubbed me, was trying to use old Ellersly's necessities as a "jimmy" and "break into society." When the curtain went down for the last intermission, two young men appeared; I did not get up as I had before, but stuck to my seat—I had reached that point at which courtesy has become cowardice.

They craned and strained at her round me and over me, presently gave up and retired, disguising their anger as contempt for the bad manners of a bounder. But that disturbed me not a ripple, the more as I was delighting in a consoling discovery. Listening and watching as she talked with these young men, whom she evidently knew well, I noted that she was distant and only politely friendly in manner habitually, that while the ice might thicken for me, it was there always. I knew enough about women to know that, if the woman who can thaw only for one man is the most difficult, she is also the most constant. "Once she thaws toward me!" I said to myself.

When the young men had gone, I leaned forward until my head was close to hers, to her hair—fine, soft, abundant, electric hair. Like the infatuated fool that I was, I tore out all the pigeon-holes of my brain in search of something to say to her, something that would start her to thinking well of me. She must have felt my breath upon her neck, for she moved away slightly, and it seemed to me a shiver visibly passed over that wonderful white skin of hers.

I drew back and involuntarily said, "Beg pardon." I glanced at her mother and it was my turn to shudder. I can't hope to give an accurate impression of that stony, mercenary, mean face. There are looks that paint upon the human countenance the whole of a life, as a flash of lightning paints upon the blackness of the night miles on miles of landscape. The look of Mrs. Ellersly's—stern disapproval at her daughter, stern command that she be more civil, that she unbend—showed me the old woman's soul.

"If you wish it," I said, on impulse, to Miss Ellersly in a low voice, "I shall never try to see you again."

I could feel rather than see the blood suddenly beating in her skin, and there was in her voice a nervousness very like fright as she answered: "I'm sure mamma and I shall be glad to see you whenever you come."

"You?" I persisted.

"Yes," she said, after a brief hesitation.

"Glad?" I persisted.

She smiled—the faintest change in the perfect curve of her lips. "You are very persistent, aren't you?"

"Very," I answered. "That is why I have always got whatever I wanted."

"I admire it," said she.

"No, you don't," I replied. "You think it is vulgar, and you think I am vulgar because I have that quality—that and some others."

She did not contradict me.

"Well, I am vulgar—from your standpoint," I went on. "I have purposes and passions. And I pursue them. For instance, you."

"I?" she said tranquilly.

"You" I repeated. "I made up my mind the first day I saw you that I'd make you like me. And—you will."

"That is very flattering," said she. "And a little terrifying. For"—she faltered, then went bravely on—"I suppose there isn't anything you'd stop at in order to gain your end."

"Nothing," said I, and I compelled her to meet my gaze.

She drew a long breath, and I thought there was a sob in it—like a frightened child.

"But I repeat," I went on, "that if you wish it, I shall never try to see you again. Do you wish it?"

"I—don't—know," she answered slowly. "I think—not."

As she spoke the last word, she lifted her eyes to mine with a look of forced friendliness in them that I'd rather not have seen there. I wished to be blind to her defects, to the stains and smutches with which her surroundings must have sullied her. And that friendly look seemed to me an unmistakable hypocrisy in obedience to her mother. However, it had the effect of bringing her nearer to my own earthly level, of putting me at ease with her; and for the few remaining minutes we talked freely, I indifferent whether my manners and conversation were correct. As I helped her into their carriage, I pressed her arm slightly, and said in a voice for her only, "Until to-morrow."

XIII.

FRESH AIR IN A GREENHOUSE.

At five the next day I rang the Ellersly's bell, was taken through the drawing-room into that same library.

"I CAUGHT HER IN MY ARMS AND KISSED HER—NOT ONCE, BUT MANY TIMES."

The curtains over the double doorway between the two rooms were almost drawn. She presently entered from the hall. I admired the picture she made in the doorway—her big hat, her embroidered dress of white cloth, and that small, sweet, cold face of hers. And as I looked, I knew that nothing, nothing—no, not even her wish, her command—could stop me from trying to make her my own. That resolve must have shown in my face—it or the passion that inspired it—for she paused and paled.

"What is it?" I asked. "Are you afraid of me?"

She came forward proudly, a fine scorn in her eyes. "No," she said. "But if you knew, you might be afraid of me."

"I am," I confessed. "I am afraid of you because you inspire in me a feeling that is beyond my control. I've committed many follies in my life—I have moods in which it amuses me to defy fate. But those follies have always been of my own willing. You"—I laughed—"you are a folly for me. But one that compels me."

She smiled—not discouragingly—and seated herself on a tiny sofa in the corner, a curiously impregnable intrenchment, as I noted—for my impulse was to carry her by storm. I was astonished at my own audacity; I was wondering where my fear of her had gone, my awe of her superior fineness and breeding. "Mamma will be down in a few minutes," she said.

"I didn't come to see your mother," replied I. "I came to see you."

She flushed, then froze—and I thought I had once more "got upon" her nerves with my rude directness. How eagerly sensitive our nerves are to bad impressions of one we don't like, and how coarsely insensible to bad impressions of one we do like!

"I see I've offended again, as usual," said I. "You attach so much importance to petty little dancing-master tricks and caperings. You live—always have lived—in an artificial atmosphere. Real things act on you like fresh air on a hothouse flower."

"You are—fresh air?" she inquired, with laughing sarcasm.

"I am that," retorted I. "And good for you—as you'll find when you get used to me."

I heard voices in the next room—her mother's and some man's. We waited until it was evident we were not to be disturbed. As I realized that fact and surmised its meaning, I looked triumphantly at her.

"I see you are nerving yourself," said I with a laugh. "You are perfectly certain I am going to propose to you."

She flamed scarlet and half-started up.

"Your mother—in the next room—expects it, too," I went on, laughing even more disagreeably. "Your parents need money—they have decided to sell you, their only large income-producing asset. And I am willing to buy. What do you say?"

I was blocking her way out of the room. She was standing, her breath coming fast, her eyes blazing. "You are—frightful!" she exclaimed in a low voice.

"Because I am frank, because I am honest? Because I want to put things on a sound basis? I suppose, if I came lying and pretending and let you lie and pretend, and let your parents and Sam lie and pretend, you would find me—almost tolerable. Well, I'm not that kind. When there's no special reason one way or the other, I'm willing to smirk and grimace and dodder and drivel, like the rest of your friends, those ladies and gentlemen. But when there's business to be transacted, I am business-like. Let's not begin with your thinking you are deceiving me, and so hating me and despising me and trying to keep up the deception. Let's begin right."

She was listening; she was no longer longing to fly from the room; she was curious. I knew I had scored.

"In any event," I continued, "you would have married for money. You've been brought up to it, like all these girls of your set. You'd be miserable without luxury. If you had your choice between love without luxury and luxury without love, it'd be as easy to foretell which you'd do as to foretell how a starving poet would choose between a loaf of bread and a volume of poems. You may love love; but you love life—your kind of life—better!"

She lowered her head. "It is true," she said. "It is low and vile, but it is true."

"Your parents need money—" I began.

She stopped me with a gesture. "Don't blame them," she pleaded. "I am more guilty than they."

I was proud of her as she made that confession. "You have the making of a real woman in you," said I. "I should have wanted you even if you hadn't. But what I now see makes what I thought a folly of mine look more like wisdom."

"I must warn you," she said, and now she was looking directly at me, "I shall never love you."

"Never is a long time," replied I. "I'm old enough to be cynical about prophecy."

"I shall never love you," she repeated. "For many reasons you wouldn't understand. For one you will understand."

"I understand the 'many reasons' you say are beyond me," said I. "For, dear young lady, under this coarse exterior I assure you there's hidden a rather sharp outlook on human nature—and—well, nerves that respond to the faintest changes in you as do mine can't be altogether without sensitiveness. What's the other reason—the reason? That you think you love some one else?"

"Thank you for saying it for me," she replied.

You can't imagine how pleased I was at having earned her gratitude, even in so little a matter. "I have thought of that," said I. "It is of no consequence."

"But you don't understand," she pleaded earnestly.

"On the contrary, I understand perfectly," I assured her. "And the reason I am not disturbed is—you are here, you are not with him."

She lowered her head so that I had no view of her face.

"You and he do not marry," I went on, "because you are both poor?"

"No," she replied.

"Because he does not care for you?"

"No—not that," she said.

"Because you thought he hadn't enough for two?"

A long pause, then—very faintly: "No—not that."

"Then it must be because he hasn't as much money as he'd like, and must find a girl who'll bring him—what he most wants."

She was silent.

"That is, while he loves you dearly, he loves money more. And he's willing to see you go to another man, be the wife of another man, be—everything to another man." I laughed. "I'll take my chances against love of that sort."

"You don't understand," she murmured. "You don't realize—there are many things that mean nothing to you and that mean—oh, so much to people brought up as we are."

"Nonsense!" said I. "What do you mean by 'we'? Nature has been bringing us up for a thousand thousand years. A few years of silly false training doesn't undo her work. If you and he had cared for each other, you wouldn' be here, apologizing for his selfish vanity."

"No matter about him," she cried impatiently, lifting her head haughtily. "The point is, I love him—and always shall. I warn you."

"And I take you at my own risk?"

Her look answered "Yes!"

"Well,"—I took her hand—"then, we are engaged."

Her whole body grew tense, and her hand chilled as it lay in mine. "Don't—please don't," I said gently. "I'm not so bad as all that. If you will be as generous with me as I shall be with you, neither of us will ever regret this."

There were tears on her cheeks as I slowly released her hand.

"I shall ask nothing of you that you are not ready freely to give," I said.

Impulsively she stood and put out her hand, and the eyes she lifted to mine were shining and friendly. I caught her in my arms and kissed her—not once but many times. And it was not until the chill of her ice-like face had cooled me that I released her, drew back red and ashamed and stammering apologies. But her impulse of friendliness had been killed; she once more, as I saw only too plainly, felt for me that sense of repulsion, felt for herself that sense of self-degradation.

"I cannot marry you!" she muttered.

"You can—and will—and must," I cried, infuriated by her look.

There was a long silence. I could easily guess what was being fought out in her mind. At last she slowly drew herself up. "I can not refuse," she said, and her eyes sparkled with defiance that had hate in it. "You have the power to compel me. Use it, like the brute you refuse to let me forget that you are." She looked so young, so beautiful, so angry—and so tempting.

"So I shall!" I answered. "Children have to be taught what is good for them. Call in your mother, and we'll tell her the news."

Instead, she went into the next room. I followed, saw Mrs. Ellersly seated at the tea-table in the corner farthest from the library where her daughter and I had been negotiating.

"Won't you give us tea, mother?" said Anita, on her surface not a trace of the cyclone that must still have been raging in her.

"Congratulate me, Mrs. Ellersly," said I. "Your daughter has consented to marry me."

Instead of speaking, Mrs. Ellersly began to cry—real tears. And for a moment I thought there was a real heart inside of her somewhere. But when she spoke, that delusion vanished.

"You must forgive me, Mr. Blacklock," she said in her hard, smooth, polite voice. "It is the shock of realizing I'm about to lose my daughter." And I knew that her tears were from joy and relief—Anita had "come up to the scratch;" the hideous menace of "genteel poverty" had been averted.

"Do give us tea, mamma," said Anita. Her cold, sarcastic tone cut my nerves and her mother's like a razor blade. I looked sharply at her, and wondered whether I was not making a bargain vastly different from that my passion was picturing.

(To be Continued.)

Regulating the Whirlwind

But the Mother Failed to Succeed in This Case.

The Mississippi is proverbially an unreliable quantity and Shakespeare has celebrated the "woman's wit," which, when the door is shut, will "out at the casement," or, that exit being denied, selects the keyhole or flies out with the smoke. But even more difficult to foresee or control is the action of the individuality inclosed in the small boy.

Young Mrs. Randall was often in despair about Percy, who would ask dreadful questions at inopportune moments. For instance, when there were guests—and guests were frequent at the minister's table—in some lull of conversation Percy was liable to point a fat finger at the guest and solemnly inquire: "Mamma, what's that man's name?"

However, Percy could by superhuman exertions, be made to understand some things, and then he invariably obeyed—one great comfort to the young mother. Just before two visiting clergymen arrived for supper Mrs. Randall had an interview with her son, and succeeded in making him understand that he must not ask people's names.

"Besides, mother's going to tell you just what these gentlemen's names are now," she said, "then you won't need to ask."

Percy repeated "Mr. Small" and "Mr. Lawson" until he thoroughly knew them. The mother put him in his high chair this time with a sense of relief.

He kept praiseworthy silence for some time, but finally—

"Mamma," he burst out—and the fat finger irresistibly lifted itself—"which one of 'em is Mr. Small an' which is Mr. Lawson?"

Uncle Jerry.

"Don't take no stock in the man that's always whisperin'," advised Uncle Jerry Peebles. "If he's afraid to trust his own voice there's some thin' wrong on the inside of 'im."

IN DICTATOR'S ROLE

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT'S ATTITUDE AT THE PRESENT.

Talk of "Plot" and Fund Raised to Oppose Him Is Plainly a Political Move—The Corruption in 1904.

That was a shrewd move of President Roosevelt to have the "official" declaration made that the anti-administration Republicans are in league with the railroads and have raised a fund of $5,000,000 to defeat "my policies," or "a man of my type." It was evidently intended to turn the public from paying too much attention to the confessions of Mr. Harriman that the president asked him to raise an addition to the corruption fund of 1904 to save the state of New York to the Republicans. It also has the effect of putting those Republicans who are not favorable to Taft, or whoever else the president may eventually decide upon as his successor, on the defensive, and the weaklings hasten to declare their allegiance to the dictator.

The president does not favor the indorsement of favorite sons by their states and demands that his friends see that a delegation is arranged for, that will either vote for him for a third term or follow his instructions as to whom to vote for. There probably is no truth in the statement that $5,000,000, or any other sum, has been subscribed or collected to defeat the president in his ambition to control the next Republican national convention. It is far too soon for money to be spent, as any tyro in political doings knows, but the pretended exposure of "a plot," with vast financial resources behind it, is being used as a hair-raiser to scare the Republican voters against giving aid and comfort to the "conspirators." It will be "a good enough Morgan" until after the delegates are elected to the Republican national convention. As the machine politicians control the election of delegates to the Republican conventions in most congressional districts and states, and the rank and file either do the bidding of the bosses, or are a helpless minority, there is no doubt that when the time comes there will be all the "boodle" necessary to enliven the proceedings in the usual Republican manner. But experience shows that the corporations and trusts have generally found it cheaper and more convenient to buy enough of the delegates to Republican conventions to make a majority after they have been elected, than to bother with caucuses and the minor conventions.

The corporations and trusts may be relied upon in the future, as in the past, to furnish the money to elect the Republican candidate for president, whoever he may be. They did it in 1896 and in 1900 for McKinley, and in 1904 for President Roosevelt. The latter may deny it forever and a day, but the sworn evidence in the life insurance investigation shows that the corporation magnates paid large sums in 1904 to the chairman and treasurer of the Republican national committee, and we have the admission of Mr. Harriman that he gave a check for $50,000, and some friends of Senator Depew paid in the aggregate $150,000 more, less than ten days before election.

The president should quit talking of boodle to defeat him until he has caused his committee to make restitution of the trust funds of the widows and orphans that were collected in 1904.

The Spoils of Office.

How Republican politicians will abuse each other and fight over a few petty federal offices. It appears that President Roosevelt has turned down the henchmen of Hon. James Wolcott Wadsworth, who for 20 years has been the most influential Republican leader of eastern New York, and for the same period representting the Thirty-fourth district in congress. The refusal to continue his friends in office has led him to declare: "The whole thing stamps the president as unreliable, a faker and a humbug. For years he has indulged in lofty sentiments and violates them all for the sake of gratifying a petty spite. It is apparent that he intends to persecute in a like manner every federal officeholder who is so unfortunate as to be my friend. Thank God, he 'can't fool all the people all the time,' and the country is fast awakening to the real character of this bloody hero of Kettle hill."

The reply to this should make the recent volcanic outbursts tame in comparison and that Wadsworth will be relegated to the Annanias class goes without saying.

As Wadsworth's son is speaker of the lower house of the New York legislature there are immense political possibilities lurking in the near future. In the meantime the atmosphere of the White House has assumed a ruddy tint that bodes discomfort for Secretary Loeb and the "Tenth Court Cabinet."

Taxes Paid to Trusts.

If a tariff for revenue was now enacted the trusts would be compelled to reduce their profits to prevent foreign products from competing with them, but the range of prices would still be higher than formerly, in consequence of the inflation of the currency through the increased output of gold and the increasse of the national bank currency. As the gold inflation is world-wide the price of commodities everywhere, measured in gold, have increased 46 per cent. The difference between the increases here and abroad, or 25 per cent., is the price we all pay in tariff taxes or increased trust profits, for the Republican policy of protecting the trusts.

George's Neglected Opportunity.

"I beg of you not to think of those things you do not have," said the amiable Mr. Taft to the Porto Ricans. What a pity the late George III. of England did not have an amiable person like Taft to send over here and palaver to our great-grandfathers when they were getting their flint locks ready, and preparing to fi. Newgate prison with the "red coats."

TRADING AT HOME

MANY REASONS WHY IT IS THE BEST POLICY.

SELF-INTEREST A BIG FEATURE

That Which Benefits the Community as a Whole Benefits Each Individual—The "Why and Wherefore."

As self-interest is the law which governs the transactions of trade, it is the first light in which the subject of "Trading at Home" must be treated. Sentiment has little influence in trade.

The prosperity of any community depends on the volume of business transacted within its borders. The facility with which business can be transacted depends largely upon the amount of money in circulation and any influence which takes money out of a community is detrimental to the financial welfare of the community.

It is in this respect that trading with mail order houses cripples a community. Money which should be kept in local circulation goes to swell the volume of money in the distant city instead of remaining at home to be turned over and over again as the medium of transfer among local merchants and their customers.

The effect of this diversion of money is not confined to the merchants who lose sales thereby; it extends eventually to every member of the community. It is a curtailment of business which affects the value of all property even to the labor of the man who is dependent on a day's work for his living. It reacts upon the people who purchase away from home in a degree which more than offsets any possible saving in price that may be effected in the purchase.

Every dollar sent out of any community for goods which can be purchased at home represents a percentage of injustice to the community itself. In the first place, some merchant loses the profit on a sale. Not only that, but the price of the article represents so much of the merchant's capital which is tied up in the article and is not working. Having capital tied up means that the operations of the merchant are curtailed to that extent. He has that much less to spend; that much less to pay in salaries to his clerks; to pay in patronage of the butcher, the baker and the other purveyors of the necessities of life; to invest in property, in newspaper advertising; to deposit in bank where it may be used by other members of the community, or to devote to church or charity. The money which goes to the mail order house decreases the per capita of circulation in the community; a factor which determines largely the value of all goods or property on the market; the scale of wages and the interest on loans.

It is not hard to trace the effect of the diversion of money from its legitimate channels. When money is scarce trade languishes because of the lack of circulating medium; merchants and all others curtail expenses; the volume of trade decreases and nothing restores activity in trade but an increase from some quarter of the circulating medium. When the volume of money increases, trade moves and it moves as fast as the volume of money will permit. Money that is working is constantly producing profit to all; money that is not working produces stagnation in trade.

Accordingly, it is to the interest of every member of a community to confine his expenditures as nearly as possible to the community in which he lives. Every dollar he spends at home helps to make his own holdings more valuable because they are more salable. When a community has money with which to buy there is little difficulty to sell and if the money is not diverted, it revolves constantly in the financial circle of the community, earning a profit for everyone who handles it and turns it over.

Accordingly, the money spent at home is bearing compound interest for the community. Its effect is apparent even to the outsider. Spending money at home is a species of loyalty which makes materially for the progress of the community. If the community is composed of the sort of people who spend their money at home it advances rapidly. There is money for public improvements, money for new enterprises. The money which the loyal man makes at home is invested at home; the city grows, the streets are improved and the marks of prosperity and progress are evident on every side.

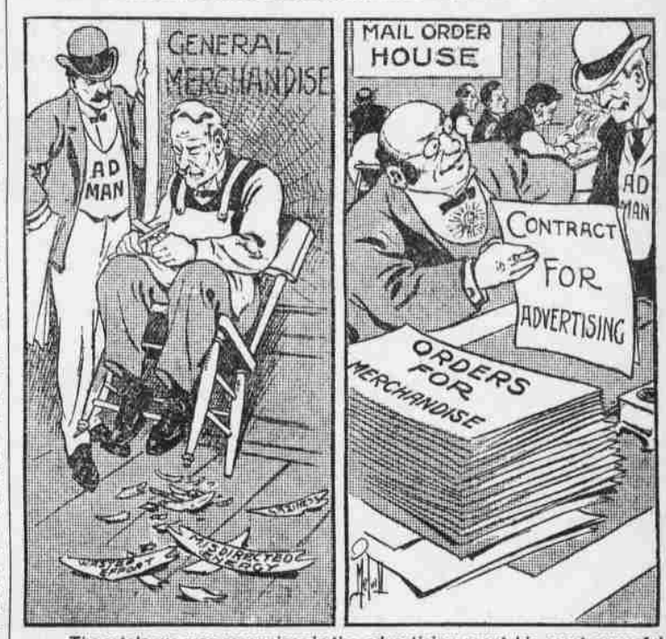
We are wont to inveigh against the wealthy man who makes his money in one town and invests it in another. We criticize him for want of loyalty to the community which produced his wealth and feel that we are done an injustice by his failure to put his money in home enterprises which would increase the business and prosperity of our city. The criticism is justified and it holds just as good in a lesser degree to the man who trades out of town. It is the same offense on a smaller scale.

The effect of the reverse policy is promptly seen. The writer has in mind a notable instance. Two cities of about 15,000 population each are situated on opposite sides of a river which is a boundary between two states. Each contains several millionaires who made their money in the lumber trade in the two towns. The millionaires of one of the cities are putting their money into other industries in the same town as the lumbering goes out. As a result, the town is rapidly forging to the front; every one is prosperous, the demand for houses exceeds the supply; property is valuable and every one is working. The millionaires of the town across the river are investing their money in western and southern pine lands. The town is languishing for lack of money; new industries cannot start because of lack of capital; merchants are failing; stores and houses are being vacated; people are moving away and a general air of poverty and decay pervades the place.

Few cities present such strong examples of the value of money spent at home but the same principle holds true in every community. It is due every community to reinvest the money it produces in the community which produces it.

The chance of being swindled is an argument used against trading with the mail order houses. Goods advertised at cut prices often fail to measure up to the description of the advertisement. The few cents which is saved on the price of an article so bought is usually sacrificed in the quality of the article. Buying from the mail order house is buying blind. A purchaser never thinks of buying from a home merchant without examining the goods, but will often send his money to a mail order house with blind faith that the article will prove to be as represented. How often this faith is misplaced can be proven only by comparing the goods bought from mail order houses with the goods offered for sale at home. If the mail order buyer would follow this system for a little while, he would probably find that the goods offered at home are of better quality and as good bargains as the mail order goods, taking quality into consideration. If this presumption is true, the buyer of mail order goods is a distinct loser, as he has secured inferior goods and has robbed the community in which he lives, as well as himself, of the use of the money.

F. R. SINGLETON.



The catalogue man recognizes in the advertising agent his most powerful assistant. He realizes that it is advertising which brings him his orders. Let the local merchants awaken to the fact that the local papers can do for them just what the advertising agents do for the catalogue houses and the flow of money to the city mail order houses from this community will stop.

HAD TO BE ON TIME.

Dinner Giver Would Allow His Guests No Latitude.

Closely parallel to the fag end of the Euston road, and visible from it at various turnings is a street which belongs to few men's London. It is a dingy, granite paved, populous street of no attraction, the sort of street in which you might expect to see on a fine day a dancing bear.

Yet this street has known better times and eager guests. In the house he knew as No. 43, now obliterated by a big new warehouse, Dr. William Kitchener entertained his fellow wits and gourmets. He had ample means to ride his three hobbies—optics, cookery and music. His dinners were often elaborate experiments in cookery, and the guests had to recognize this fact.

Five minutes past five was the minute, and if a guest came late the janitor had irrevocable orders not to admit him, for it was held by the mythical "Committee of Taste," of whom Kitchener was "secretary," that the perfection of some of the dishes was often so evanescent that the delay of one minute after their arrival at the medidiant of concoction will render them no longer worthy of men of taste.—T. P.'s Weekly.

Civilization in Abyssinia.

A sawmill is already at work at Adis Ababa, Abyssinia, and Greek artisans are engaged in quarrying and stone hewing. Machinery in connection with house building generally is likely to be in demand as soon as the means of transport are simplified. The government is already building in European style and stone houses may be seen, some even of three stories in height in the capital.

Dreams Go by Contraries.

"What do you suppose is every Londoner's day dream?"

"I don't know, unless it is to become a knight mayor."—Baltimore American.